

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTONFOUR NEW RACES OF SITTIDAE AND CERTHIDAE
FROM MEXICO.

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The following descriptions of three nuthatches and a creeper were originally drawn up from specimens in the British Museum and later modified slightly to accommodate the characters shown by additional specimens in the collections of the U. S. National Museum.

The situation regarding the white-breasted nuthatches of Mexico is very comparable to that which existed in western North America a generation or so ago when all western birds were lumped under the name of *aculeata*, but which now are known to belong to several easily distinguishable races. Until very recently all of the Mexican birds similarly have been included under the name of *Sitta carolinensis mexicana* Nelson and Palmer, the type locality of which is Mount Orizaba in Puebla near the southern end of the Mexican plateau. Herbert Brandt (*Auk*, 55, April, 1938, p. 269) has recently separated the birds of Coahuila and the Chisos Mountains of Texas as *Sitta carolinensis oberholseri*. The present writer has two other Mexican races to propose at this time and believes that at least two more can be defined when additional material is collected. The two here named represent the smallest and the largest of the races of *Sitta carolinensis* in point of wing measurement.

***Sitta carolinensis kinneari*, subsp. nov.**

Type.—Male adult in complete, fresh, fall plumage, 92.3.1.63 British Museum; Amula (Tixtla), Guerrero, August, 1888, altitude 6000 feet; collected by Mrs. H. H. Smith.

Subspecific characters.—Smallest of the races of *Sitta carolinensis*; coloration similar to *Sitta carolinensis mexicana* Nelson and Palmer ventrally, but dorsally very much paler.

Range.—Mexico in the States of Guerrero (Chilpancingo; Omilteme; Amula) and Oaxaca (Oaxaca; Cerro San Filipe).

Remarks.—As long ago as 1859, Selater (*Ibis*, 1859, pp. 363 and 373) called attention to the very small size of a specimen from Cinco Señores, Oaxaca, in comparison with those from Vera Cruz but until now no one seems to have been sufficiently interested to investigate the matter further.

The characters of *kinneari* are best shown in Guerrero. Oaxaca specimens tend to be intermediate toward *mexicanus* in color but are included here because of their small size.

MEASUREMENTS.

	WING	TAIL	EXP. CUL.	TARSUS	MID. TOE MINUS CLAW
9 male <i>kinneari</i>	82-88 (84)	41-44 (43)	14.6-16.0 (15.3)	16.5-16.8 (16.7)	13.3-14.2 (13.8)
5 female <i>kinneari</i>	82-84 (83)	41-43 (42)	14.7-15.0 (14.8)	15.5-15.8 (15.7)	13.0-13.1 (13.1)

Sitta carolinensis umbrosa, subsp. nov.

Type.—Male adult, 164053 Biological Survey collection; Sierra Madre, near Guadalupe y Calvo, southern Chihuahua, Mexico, September 1, 1898; collected by E. W. Nelson and E. A. Goldman.

Subspecific characters.—Similar to *Sitta carolinensis mexicana* of the south-central part of the Mexican plateau, but dorsal coloration darker; wing longer, in fact longer than in any other race of the species.

Range.—Mountains of northern Jalisco (Bolaños), Nayarit (Santa Teresa), western Zacatecas (Sierra Valparaiso; Plateado), Durango (El Salto; Ciudad), southern Chihuahua (many localities north to Pinos Altos and El Carmen) and southeastern Sonora (Mina Abundancia on the Chihuahua boundary).

Remarks.—The largest specimens are from Chihuahua;—those from the southernmost points are a little smaller but are equally dark colored. Thanks to the authorities of the United States National Museum and the Bureau of Biological Survey, I have been able to examine a series of seven topotypes (including the type) of *mexicana*. These prove to be typical of the race of the southern and central parts of the plateau region in general, including eastern Zacatecas and southern Jalisco. Typical *mexicana*, while dark below like all the Mexican races of *Sitta carolinensis*, is not particularly dark dorsally; in fact is but little darker than Rocky Mountain specimens of *nelsoni*. This same fact was noted by Ridgway (*Birds of North and Middle America*, Part 3, 1904, p. 448) who considered the short bill and dark underparts the only characters by which to distinguish *mexicana* from *nelsoni*. As to the newly described *oberholseri* Brandt, I have seen no material. It is said to be slightly darker above than *mexicana* (in which case it must closely resemble *umbrosa*) but the measurements are entirely too small for the latter form.

MEASUREMENTS.

	WING	TAIL	EXP. CUL.	TARSUS	MID. TOE MINUS CLAW
21 male <i>umbrosa</i>	89-98 (95.5)	43-52 (47.2)	16.5-18.5 (17.4)	16.5-20.0 (17.6)	14.0-16.5 (15.4)
16 female <i>umbrosa</i>	87-97 (92.4)	44-49 (45.5)	16.0-17.7 (16.7)	16.5-19.3 (17.7)	14.3-16.4 (14.9)

Some nine years ago the writer (Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash., 42, 1929, pp. 175-178) reviewed the races of the pygmy nuthatch (*Sitta pygmaea* Vigors) and left in abeyance the status of specimens from southern Mexico. Since that time he has had access to considerable series in the British Museum and the collections of the United States National Museum and has found that there is an additional race from the southern part of the Mexican plateau. This is described as follows:

Sitta pygmaea flavinucha, subsp. nov.

Type.—Male adult, 142763 Bureau of Biological Survey; Huitzilac, Morelos, Mexico, December 31, 1892; collected by E. W. Nelson.

Subspecific characters.—A relatively large race of *Sitta pygmaea*,—about the size of *Sitta pygmaea chihuahuae* van Rossem of northwestern Mexico,—and with long wing, short bill, and brownish head coloration. Differs from the geographically nearest race (*chihuahuae*) and from all other races in having the concealed or semi-concealed nape patch clay color or yellowish cream instead of white or creamy white.

Range.—Highlands of central and southern Mexico.

Remarks.—35 specimens of *flavinucha* have been examined from Mexico (Mt. Popocatepetl; Mt. Iztaccihuatl; Valley of Mexico), Puebla (Mt. Orizaba), Morelos (Huitzilac), Vera Cruz (Cofre de Perote; Jalapa), Michoacan (Mt. Tancitaro), and Jalisco (San Sebastian; Sierra Nevada de Colima).

Two specimens from Santa Teresa, Nayarit, are intermediate but are nearest to *chihuahuae*.

MEASUREMENTS.

	WING	TAIL	CULMEN FROM BASE
13 adult male <i>flavinucha</i>	66-71	36-39	14.0-15.0

Ludlow Griscom (Ornithology of Guerrero, 1934, p. 303) has previously commented on the small size and brown coloration of the single Guerrero specimen of *Certhia familiaris* at his disposal. The series from the State of Guerrero in the British Museum verifies Griscom's observation and the race is named as

Certhia familiaris guerrensis, subsp. nov.

Type.—Male adult, 99.1.11.56 British Museum; Omilteme, Guerrero, Mexico, July, 1888; collected by Mrs. H. H. Smith.

Subspecific characters.—A member of the small, west-Mexican group of creepers (wings of males averaging about 63 mm.). Coloration browner

than *Certhia familiaris jaliscensis* dorsally and slightly darker as well as browner (less purely gray) ventrally. Compared with the distinctly larger *Certhia familiaris alticola* Miller of south-central Mexico, coloration browner dorsally and darker ventrally.

Range.—The Sierra Madre del Sur of Guerrero.

Remarks.—Unfortunately, although there is a considerable series of this race in the British Museum, the notes on the exact number seem to have been lost. In the extensive series of *alticola* in that institution there is a series of nine specimens from the Cofre de Perote in the State of Vera Cruz which are *very much* darker below and slightly darker dorsally than typical *alticola*. I hesitate to name them only because the series of *alticola*, while extensive, is not strictly comparable seasonally.